

PHILIPPINE DIGITAL RIGHTS ELECTORAL AGENDA

1. IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF INTERNET ACCESS BY ALL FILIPINOS

- Approve the Open Access In Data Transmission Bill, which seeks to lower barriers to market entry, fast-track and lower the cost of deploying broadband facilities, and make more spectrum available for Internet service.
- Allow and encourage telcos and ISPs to share cellular towers to speed up the deployment of the internet across the country.
- The current expiry date of unused prepaid credits of mobile users, regardless of amount, is up to one year from date of top-up should not have an expiration date.
- Create opportunities for the use of technology that works best for people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities.
- Reduce the number of documentary requirements for application of home internet connectivity.
- Increase the number of public schools and health service centers all over the country with access to free public wi-fi.

2. PROMOTE FREE EXPRESSION ON THE INTERNET

- Repeal the cyberlibel provision in the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 (RA10175) and decriminalize online libel, as the application of the criminal law should only be used as a last resort.
- Review existing “fake news” laws which are prone to be punitive, overbroad, and general in scope, and therefore are prone to abuse.
- “Fake news” laws should be a last resort, and should be crafted with careful and deep consideration and understanding of information disorder, online harm, and other related concepts; and should uphold human rights. The scope, meaning and effect of the law/s should be clear, precise and public.



3. NURTURE A ROBUST LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT THAT PROTECTS THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND SECURITY OF CITIZENS

- Implement the Philippine Identification System in compliance with national and international data protection standards.
- Any SIM card registration measure should not be made mandatory and should be aligned with human rights.
- To protect the right to anonymity online, social media users should not be required to register their real names when making an account. This is especially crucial for those from vulnerable sectors that benefit from anonymity, such as members of the LGBTQIA+ community and victim-survivors of domestic abuse.
- Reject any law or policy that criminalizes or penalizes the use of encryption technology in the exercise of one's right to privacy.
- Repeal or amend any law that legalizes mass surveillance to align with human rights standards.
- Amend the Anti-Terror Law to limit the surveillance powers of the military and law enforcement.
- Ensure that any measure that infringes on the privacy of citizens and was created for the purpose of COVID-19 response (e.g., AI-powered CCTV monitoring systems) is not used for anything other than its original purpose.



4. ENSURE THAT EVERYONE HAS EQUAL RIGHTS TO LEARN ABOUT, ACCESS, DEFINE, USE, AND SHAPE THE INTERNET REGARDLESS OF SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION

- Repeal the provision on cybersex in the Cybercrime Prevention Act and remove it from the implementing rules.
- Uphold safe online spaces and ensure enabling and responsive mechanisms are in place for users, especially victim-survivors, to be empowered to report various manifestations of online gender-based violence, including online sexual harassment.
- Ensure clear delineation of responsibilities among internet intermediaries, private sector, and the State to ensure that it does not devolve its tasks and lose its responsibility as primary duty bearer in addressing cyber trafficking.
- Create an enabling environment to destigmatize victim-survivors of cyber trafficking, empower them to seek help, and center their safety and autonomy across law enforcement and justice system processes.
- Prohibit the operations of any offshore gaming by any means or device because it exacerbates prostitution and human trafficking in the country.
- Withdraw, revoke, or deny the license of any foreign-based operator, local gaming agent, POGO, and service provider in the event of any criminal offense and heinous crime committed by such.



5. ENABLE AND EMPOWER FILIPINOS TO REQUEST PUBLIC INFORMATION FROM ALL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT AND ACCESS FREE, LIBRE, AND OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE

- Pass and implement on a nationwide scale the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill, which has been languishing in Congress since the 1990s,.
- Mandate the use of the online FOI portal not only for executive agencies but for all agencies of the Philippine government.
- Create an open data policy to encourage government agencies to make their data publicly accessible.
- Promote the use of free, libre, and open source software (FLOSS) in the private and public sector to lower the overall cost of ICT and reduce the country's dependence on proprietary software and computer applications.

6. PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE THE USE OF THE INTERNET FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND INNOVATION

- Provide grants and zero-interest loans, access to venture capital of investment, and employment support scheme to local tech startups.
- Recognize the rights of gig economy workers.
- Build transparency and accountability into laws and content restriction policies and practices.
- Taxation must not create nor contribute to barriers to accessibility and affordability of digital services. It must go after e-commerce giants rather than burden startups, small sellers, and content creators.
- Protect people's rights in the digital economy, including the creation of new business incentives, and enable innovation and human-centric technology while protecting the privacy and security of personal information.
- Commit to international standards and guiding principles on business and human rights.
- Uphold ethical use of machine learning methods. Create human rights-centered standards of transparency, openness, and accountability especially in large-scale use of artificial intelligence.

7. BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO FACILITATE MORE ACTIVE, RESPONSIBLE, AND PRODUCTIVE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

- Provide digital literacy educational programs to all citizens to help improve the information ecosystem and promote responsible digital citizenship.
- Update digital literacy programs to be at pace with innovations in technology and based on rights-based principles and ethics.
- Provide gadgets for all students to enable remote learning.
- Provide capable and secure devices to all students, especially those that are disadvantaged, to use for online learning.
- Teach students how to use the devices securely and safely while also maximizing the potential of the devices for learning.

8. STRENGTHEN MECHANISMS TO ENSURE THE SECURITY OF CRITICAL INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURES AND THE SAFETY OF FILIPINO INTERNET USERS

- Review and revisit rationale for higher penalties for cyber crimes.
- Prohibit the construction of cellular towers in military camps and other sites that might compromise national security.
- Reclassify telecommunication companies as public utilities.
- Execute any foreign involvement in critical infrastructures with full transparency and accountability measures.

9. ENCOURAGE AND ENABLE SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE INTERNET

- Review the implementation of RA 6969 (Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes) and RA 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act) and include a regulatory framework that will ensure a proper strategy and action plan to handle e-wastes.